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Letter No. 2374

August 4, 1988

U.S. MAY AG.  
EXPORTS

U.S. agricultural exports for May totaled 13.3 million tons, valued at \$2.97 billion, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. This compares to exports of 10.4 million tons valued at \$2.18 billion for May 1987 and 14 million tons valued at \$3.05 billion for April 1988. This brings U.S. agricultural exports for the fiscal year to date to \$23.8 billion and 104.6 million tons. That's compared to \$18.9 billion and 85.3 million tons for the same period last year.

SOVIET GRAIN  
HARVEST...  
TOO MUCH RAIN

As of July 25, small grains and pulses in the USSR were cut over an area of 26.8 million hectares, of which 21.5 million were threshed, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The harvest is ahead of last year's, but lags marginally behind the corresponding averages of 1982-86. During those five years, an average of 28.7 million hectares were cut and 22.9 million threshed. This year's wet weather in European USSR has slowed the harvest somewhat.

NO ADJUSTMENT  
IN WHEAT PROGRAM

Sec'y of Agriculture Richard E. Lyng announced that there will be no adjustment in the 10 percent acreage reduction program for wheat in 1989. He said, "Even though the severe drought has reduced wheat production, especially that of spring wheat, the prospective supply-demand balance does not call for a change in the previously announced wheat acreage reduction program in 1989."

LOANS EXTENDED  
ONE MONTH

Producers with wheat, feed grains or soybean loans that mature on July 31, were given an optional extension to August 31. All terms and conditions of the individual contracts will remain the same according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Producers with reserve contracts, special producer storage loan contracts and 1985 and 1986 extended loan contracts will continue to earn storage payments through August 31. The payments for the additional month's storage will be made when the loan is settled.

RESERVE LOANS

Producers may no longer redeem corn pledged as collateral for Farmer-Owned Reserve Loans without paying a penalty, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The national average adjusted price of \$2.34 per bushel for corn on Aug. 1 was 69 cents below the reserve trigger release level. Storage payments for corn pledged as collateral for Farmer-Owned Reserve loans will continue to be made by the Commodity Credit Corporation.

ARE YOU "ACTIVELY ENGAGED IN FARMING"? The U.S. Department of Agriculture announced new rules for determining whether a person is "actively engaged in farming" for payment eligibility. The ASCS county committees are now required to determine whether a person meets the "actively engaged in farming" requirement for payment eligibility under 1989 and 1990 price support and production adjustment programs and the Conservation Reserve Program. For the 1988 and previous crops, the only requirement for payment eligibility was to be identified as a producer. The final rules are published in the Aug. 5 Federal Register.

CATTLE INVENTORY DOWN The July 1 inventory of cattle and calves in the U.S. is the lowest mid-year inventory since mid-year estimates were begun in 1973. All cattle and calves totaled 108 million head, down 1 percent from the 110 million of July 1, 1987, and 4 percent below the 112 million two years ago, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The downward trend in cattle inventories began six years ago.

COWS DON'T MIND 500,000 VOLTS OVERHEAD Can cattle be safely grazed and confined under high-voltage electrical lines? The answer is "Yes," according to a study involving the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Oregon State U., and power companies of both the U.S. and Canada. Results from this study suggest that farmers do not have to make allowances for animal behavior under or near high-voltage powerlines. They studied the cows eating and sleeping under the power line, and 1,500 feet away from it. A small minority moved away from directly under the lines during their resting periods, but none were physically affected at any time during the study. They were happy to eat and sleep under the line. Well, actually, they didn't care one way or another.

AUG. LOAN INTEREST RATE: 7-5/8% Commodity loans disbursed in August by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Commodity Credit Corporation will carry a 7-5/8 percent interest rate.

LIVESTOCK THAT SWIMS Catfish growers in 18 selected States had sales of \$247 million during 1987, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The total sales for 1981, the last time a similar survey was conducted, were 72 million.

LYNG ON DROUGHT & CONSERVATION In remarks delivered by Sec'y of Agriculture Richard E. Lyng at the Soil and Water Conservation Society's Conference, in Columbus, Ohio, he said, "The drought has certainly captivated our country. It has been brutal. Yet, we can take some comfort in the fact that our conservation efforts already in practice have thus far prevented anything approaching the Dust Bowl of the 1930's. The Conservation Reserve Program has some 25 million acres of the most highly-erodible land under protective plant cover."

WHEAT SALE TO CHINA On August 3, private exporters reported to the U.S. Department of Agriculture export sales of 300,000 metric tons of soft red winter wheat for delivery to China during the 1988-89 marketing year, which began June 1.

NOTE FOR U.S.  
FOOD EXPORTERS

U.S. food exporters have until Oct. 22 to apply for exhibit space in the U.S. pavilion at SaudiFood '89, a food industry trade show to be held in Saudi Arabia, from Feb. 25 through March 1, 1989. Applications and details are available from Ron Verdonk, FAS, USDA, Room 4649-S, Wash., D.C. 20250. Phone: 202-475-3311.

CORN TO  
JAPAN

Private exporters reported to the U.S. Department of Agriculture export sales of 203,200 metric tons of corn for delivery to Japan during the 1988-89 marketing year.

FROM OUR RADIO  
SERVICE

AGRICULTURE USA #1627...(Weekly 13½ min documentary) On this edition Chris Larson talks with a member of the U.S. negotiating team that reached an agreement with Japan on new citrus and beef quotas. The impact of the agreement and its potential for increasing U.S. exports is discussed.

AGRITAPE/FARM PROGRAM REPORT #1615...(Weekly reel of news features) USDA news highlights; No wheat ARP adjustment; Sulfamethazine testing results; Cooperative research; Agriculture at work at the Smithsonian.

CONSUMER TIME #1107...(Weekly reel of 2½-3 min features) Keeping cool; More Agriculture in Maryland classrooms; New report on diet and health; Summer! Caring for clothes in hot weather; Hot summer nights.

USDA RADIO NEWS SERVICE...Mon, Aug. 15, Cattle on feed; Tues, Aug. 16, Weekly weather and crop outlook; Livestock and poultry outlook; Milk production report. Wed, Aug. 17, Feed outlook; Fri, Aug. 19, Ag. outlook, Catfish report, Livestock slaughter. Dial the USDA National News Line 202-488-8358 or 8359. All material changed at 5 p.m. ET each working day.

FROM THE NEWS SERVICE: In addition to our normal news lines, we are offering a daily crop weather update which is changed Monday through Friday at 9 A.M. Eastern Time. The number for this report is 202-447-2545.

TELEVISION SERVICE programs, A BETTER WAY, DOWN TO EARTH, AGRICULTURAL UPDATE and SATELLITE NEWS are available on satellite Westar IV, audio 6.2 or 6.8 as follows:

Thursdays....AG UPDATE/SATELLITE NEWS, 7:30-7:45 p.m. ET.....Transponder 12D

Saturdays....A BETTER WAY, 10:00-10:30 a.m. ET.....Transponder 10D

ORIGINAL DOWN TO EARTH, 10:30-11:00 a.m. ET....Transponder 10D

UPLINK SATELLITE NEWS/AG UPDATE, 11:00-11:15 a.m. ET.....Transponder 10D

Mondays.....A BETTER WAY, 8:00-8:30 a.m. ET.....Transponder 12D

REPEAT DOWN TO EARTH, 8:30-9:00 a.m. ET....Transponder 12D

UPLINK SATELLITE NEWS/AG UPDATE, 9:00-9:15 a.m. ET.....Transponder 12D

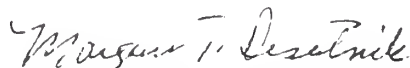
A BETTER WAY is also available on The Learning Channel SATCOM 3R, Transponder 2, Audio 6.8 each Thursday at 10:30 a.m. ET.

OFF MIKE

Herb Plambeck Press Ass't to Hardin and Butz, gets our apology. In a recent letter we stated that he was 80 years old. Herb now informs us that he is not 80. He was born on Feb. 29, which makes him 20 years old, eagerly anticipating his 21st birthday in 1992...Another youth, George Biggar, retired farm broadcaster, is getting help from Layne Beaty, retired USDA R&TV Chief, in locating copies of some of his private papers. These papers include his Army discharge from World War I. Some of you may not remember, but George once had a radio farm program for Sears Roebuck on WLS, Chicago. He was also, way in the past, program manager for the National Barn Dance when it had such stars as a boy soprano named George Goebel. Later, he bought a station in DeKalb, and now he's retired in Fargo, ND, where he's collecting his papers.

Farm Broadcasters Letter  
Radio and Television, Rm. 410A  
Office of Information, OGPA  
U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Washington, D.C. 20250-1300

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